

SEVEN DAYSIES



2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

the best in:

FOOD & DRINK PAGE 4

ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION PAGE 10

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SEVEN DAYS

2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS



Eight is a number with gravitas; who knows why? Perhaps because eight years is the better part of a decade, and we're kind of amazed to think we've given out *Days* awards so long. But that's a good thing. At least, the winners think so.

Seems like plenty of readers enjoy putting them, too — the number of responses to our survey surpassed last, the vast majority of them online. Paper ballots are almost a thing of the past, thanks to SurveyMonkey.com.

Anyhow, regular readers will find many familiar names here. A lot of old friends and businesses are just damn popular — what can we say? Some dueling competitors seem to trade places from year to year, so the only suspense is in finding out who took home the prize and who was runner-up 1999, some again and a handful of new categories keep the *Daysies* from getting stale.

To offset vote-heavy Chittenden County, we created even more "Outside" categories this year. Look for new winners primarily in central Vermont.

We changed the wording of a few standards and discussed others altogether. Sorry if this fluctuation bothers anyone out, but we're confident he will go on.

One general observation about the results: The recession's influence appeared as a slight uptick in votes for less expensive stores and restaurants, even if discounters didn't claim any *Daysies*. For the most part, respondents still favor locally owned retailers and tried-and-true service providers — and indulge themselves with the increasing number of fine-fresh dining options around the state.

Thanks to the loyal community of readers and advertisers who contribute to making Vermont a winning place in so many ways, and who continue to help this independent, locally owned media enterprise buck the trends and thrive. It must be said again. Without you we'd be probing up... you know.

PAMELA POLSTON

Featured, clockwise from top: Myra Flynn, Ferryville's First Jewelry, The Rensselaer Tap & Grill, Gregory Douglas, Gustavians





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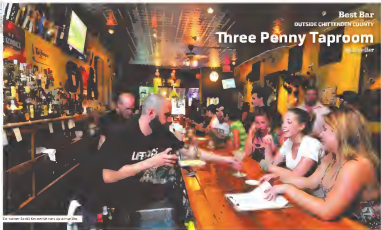
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Three Penny Taproom

BY ALICE LEVITT



Our winner, Three Penny Taproom, serves up a strong brew.



FOOD & DRINK

Since their inception eight years ago, the Dippers have produced some reliable winners. Burlingtonians are always hot for a Tex-Mex-inflected breakfast at **Penny Cane Café** — the entry takes the, er, prize for Best Breakfast/Brunch Inside Chittenden County. **Stone Soup** remains unbeatable for vegetarian fans, and **A Single Pebble** has won Best Asian Restaurant for its third year — as long as the category has existed — despite the retirement of famed chef Steve Rogan.

However, this year also brought some changes. Though **City Market/Union River Co-op** continued its unbroken winning streak in the category of Best Natural Foods Market, Inside Chittenden County, Healthy Living crept up closer than ever. In fact, many of this year's biggest surprises were in the runner-up spots.

For example, chain restaurants made a couple of appearances. The Dorset Street Friendly's was on the heels of **American Flatbread** — **Burlington Hearth** is the new category of Best Family-Friendly Restaurant. (Was it something about the name?) For Best Pizza Delivery, **Dominic's Pizzeria** in Burlington pushed **Janet's Italian** out of the runner-up spot to winner **Leonardo's Pizzeria**. Could

it be that sneaky new recipe the organic corporation is pushing in its ads?

Ethnic eateries presented their own curbside. Despite the fact that India is a part of Asia, **Indie House Restaurant** closed up again in the category of Best Ethnic Cuisine (Non-Asian) Inside Chittenden County. However, it was closely followed by a newbie to the ranks. Burlington's water-front Mexican spot, **Maderis Restaurante Mexicano Cantina**. Perhaps competitors with recently opened **Miguel's** on Main right across the street forced supporters to get vocal. Outside Chittenden County, two year-old restaurants got the bulk of the votes. **Frida's Tacos and Grill** in Stowe triumphed over **Sussexman Cafe** and its Congolese curries in Montpelier.

And, even if they didn't win — yet — several eateries new on the scene this past year were in the running, such as **Blackbird Tavern**, **August First** and **Deuce! (Duoce)** in Burlington, and **Santos Cocina Latina** in Stowe.

With new categories this year, including Best Burger, there are sure to be more shockers. Did your favorite get enough votes to register? Cross your fingers and mail us.

ALICE LEVITT

BEER HAVEN

Three Penny Taproom has as many craft brews as Big Boy or it has as many two dozen Ols in bustling Friday or Saturday night. It may be a tight squeeze in the Main Street bar which was also runner up for Best Brewpub-Outside Chittenden County. But there's no doubt about it, this place is serious about beer. The carefully rotating tap list fills up three wall-mounted chalkboards with local brews such as the Tripp Lager. California beers including North Coast, Schimshaw and international offerings from Belgium, Germany, Norway and Japan. But it's not just the beer that keeps people coming back to Three Penny. The tapas style bar food, presented almost entirely with a couple of Cook Pots, a sandwich press and a water boiler is season enough to stop by. Grab a piece of Cornishish Cup oysters at a bowl of Mancini's Minestrone. Or try a sandwich with Monche go, chorizo and whole grain mustard or grilled squash with avocado lime butter.

MESAN JAMES

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Best Vermont Microbrewery Switchback Brewing Company

Burlington



Bob Steinhilber, Steve Buckner, Scott Peters and Chris Dawson

GETTING A HEAD

In Vermont, bar has local beers on draft, you can bet one of them will be Burlington's Switchback Ale. The well-balanced, unfettered brew—which hit the market in 2002—is widely popular. This year, Switchback Brewing Company tapped the Best Vermont Microbrewery award from long-standing winner Magic Hat Brewing Company. Perhaps a coup of mystery is part of Switchback's charm: The stuff doesn't come in bottles, so bars are the only place to get a mug and meet the folks in charge. By word of mouth, the company's Facebook page quickly racked up thousands of fans, which it went live this April. But Switchback lacks a traditional website. While its classic ale is best known, Switchback released a second offering—fantasy-motif-laced Red—in 2007. These come along with local and craft moths. Slow fermented Brown Ale hit the lips. Drink up!

SUZANNE POSHAIZER

Best Burger Farmhouse Tap & Grill

Burlington

MEDIUM RARE Although they both opened in 2010 and serve patrons between hours, The Farmhouse Tap & Grill and Sky Burgers both located in downtown Burlington couldn't be more different. The former—which offers more than 100 craft beers, a Vermont cheese plate and rustic-cured meats—proudly lists its location as Fly. The latter features meats of undoubted provenance and items such as chili 'cheese' fries and Cotton Candy Martini in an atmosphere reminiscent of a steakhouse or fast-food joint. It's a testament to the diversity of Daylies voters that such disparate eateries swept the new Best Burger category with Farmhouse taking the award and Sky Burgers as runner-up. You can't come to the Green City for two all-beef burgers, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions on a sesame seed bun, but whatever your tastes, you can find a damn fine burger.

SUZANNE POSHAIZER



SEVEN DAYSIES

2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

Best place to have dinner anytime

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] American Flatbread — Burlington Hearth
- [RU] Louie's Bistro (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Sarubco's Restaurant and Bar (Montpelier)
- [RU] The Alchemist Pub & Brewery (Waterbury)

Best special-occasion restaurant

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] The Kitchen Table Bistro (Richmond)
- [RU] Trattoria Bella (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Hen of the Wood at the Guest Mill (Waterbury)
- [RU] Slarry Night Cafe (Farmington)

Best Asian restaurant

- [W] A Single Pebble (Burlington)
- [RU] Tiny Thai Restaurant (Winooski)

Best ethnic cuisine (non-Asian)

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Indie House Restaurant (Burlington)
- [RU] Moderno Restaurante Mexicano Cantina (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Frida's Taqueria and Grill (Stowe)
- [RU] Samosmen Cafe (Montpelier)

Best family-friendly restaurant

- [W] American Flatbread — Burlington Hearth
- [RU] Friendly's (South Burlington)

Best veggie fare

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Stone Soup (Burlington)
- [RU] Magnolia Bistro (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Klarret (Montpelier)
- [RU] Rhapsody Cafe (Montpelier)

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Best Vermont Specialty Food

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Cabot

THE BIG CHEESE

The cheese section of a Vermont grocery store is a beautiful place. One reason? Cabot cheddar cheese. The winner of numerous international awards, Cabot started out nearly a century ago as a small Vermont dairy co-op that made butter, not cheese. But in 1930 the farmers decided to branch out and hire a cheese maker. Since that fateful day the co-op has grown and now its steady cheddar product helps support the state's dairy community. It doesn't hurt that the cheddar is flavorful, aromatic, and, sometimes, mouth puckeringly sharp. As long as Cabot is around, turkey sandwiches across America won't lack for the tang provided by two-year-aged cheddar. With a picture of Vermont in its logo, Cabot remains a Green Mountain classic.

HEFFLEY JOHNSON

SEVEN * DAYSIES

2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

Best breakfast/branch

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Penny Cluse Café (Burlington)
- [RU] Magnolia Bistro (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Kricket (Montpelier)
- [RU] River Run (Plainfield, now closed)

Best place to do lunch

- [W] Lounge's Bistro (Burlington)
- [RU] Penny Cluse Café (Burlington)

Best late-night food

- [W] Country Kart Deli (Burlington)
- [RU] Nectar's (Burlington)

Best pizza restaurant

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] American Flatbread — Burlington/Hearth
- [RU] Junior's Italian (Burlington, Colchester)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Positive Pie (Plainfield/Montpelier)
- [RU] Picasso Pizzeria & Lounge (Stowe)

Best pizza delivery

- [W] Leonardo's Pizza (Burlington)
- [RU] Dominos Pizza (Burlington)

Best burger

- [W] The Farmhouse Tap & Grill (Burlington)
- [RU] Sky Burgers (Burlington)

Best brewpub

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Vermont Pub & Brewery (Burlington)
- [RU] American Flatbread — Burlington/Hearth

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] The Alchemist Pub & Brewery (Waterbury)
- [RU] Three Penny Taproom (Montpelier)

Best Vermont microbrewery

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Switchback Brewing Company (Burlington)
- [RU] Magic Hat Brewing Company (South Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Long Trail Brewing Company (Bridgewater Corners)
- [RU] Otter Creek Brewing/Wolverine Organic Ales (Middlebury)

Best bar

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Red Square (Burlington)
- [RU] 1/2 Lounge (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Three Penny Taproom (Montpelier)
- [RU] The Alchemist Pub & Brewery (Waterbury)



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Best Special-Occasion Restaurant The Kitchen Table Bistro

Richmond

FRESH FIND Diners shouldn't count on ordering an old favorite when heading to The Kitchen Table Bistro. Since the restaurant opened in 2013, chef's Steve and Lisa Akers (pictured) have been dedicated to serving whatever is freshest and most delicious that day. Selections of heirloom carrots, greens or tomatoes appear on dinner plates in their steak plates. The menu is farm fresh, too, and may include the occasional pig that's been finished as leftovers from the restaurant. To highlight the flavors of gorgeous ingredients, dishes at the Kitchen Table are unfussy. One recent menu included a crispy chicken leg from Molly Knoll Farm, grill-roasted corn, yellow beans and pearl onions from Hill Farm and duck's head poached with LaFosse River Angus Farm beef. That simplicity may be what earned the favor of the James Beard Award Foundation committee. For two years running, the Akerses have been joint semifinalists for the prestigious award Best Chef, Northeast.

ALICE LEVITT

SEVEN DAYSIES 2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

Best après-ski

- [W] Motzheim Restaurant (Stowe)
[RU] The Alchemist Pub & Brewery (Waterbury)

Best coffee-/teahouse

- INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY**
[W] Muddy Waters (Burlington)
[RU] Uncommon Grounds (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Capital Grounds Café (Montpelier)
[RU] Langdon Street Café (Montpelier)

Best bakery

- INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY**
[W] Minabides (Burlington)
[RU] August First (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Red-Hen Bakery & Café (Middlesex)
[RU] La Brioche (Montpelier)

Best natural-foods market

- INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY**
[W] City Market/Union River Co-op (Burlington)
[RU] Healthy Living (South Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Hunger Mountain Co-op (Montpelier)

Best Vermont specialty food

- [W] Cabot Cheddar (Cabot)
[RU] Vermont Brawns Company (South Hero)

Best street eats

- [W] The Skinny Pancake (Burlington)
[RU] Hong's Chinese Dumplings (Burlington)

Best wine seller

- [W] Cheese Traders and Wine Sellers (South Burlington)
[RU] Decalus Wine (Burlington)

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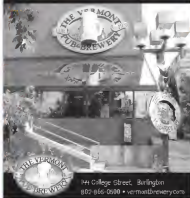
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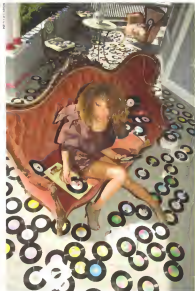
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Best Up-and-Coming Performer

Myra Flynn

COMIN' ON STRONG

It may come as a surprise that some readers consider Myra Flynn "up and coming." Not because she doesn't deserve recognition as one of the best voices in the Vermont music scene. But because she could top this year's already "named" with her 2009 debut, *Closest Neighbor*. After all she was runner-up in rock star Grace Potter in the first "localist" category last year. But Flynn's still got places to go — she's winning her second album of classic R&B (named two out in the vein of Erykah Badu, India Arie and Sharon Jones. This time, Flynn has friend and fellow songwriter [and 2003 Dayze winner] Gregory Douglas acting as producer, and he describes her new album as "a little bit edgier." While the disc probably won't be out until early next year, until then you can hear Flynn and Douglas collaborating as R&B cover band *Soul Party*, as well as playing solo at shows. With two soul-to-soul wins — now, third year, baby! Oh, and here's a fun fact: Flynn and the runner-up in this category, Justin Levinson, are getting married!

TYLER RICHARDS

ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION

Is it loyalty? Name recognition? Habit? For overlooking their eighth Dayzees, let's cheer for **Higher Ground** (Best Live Music Venue), **Club Matronoma** (Best Place to Dance), **Chris Robinson** (Best Vermont Fiction Writer), the **Firehouse Gallery** (Best Art Gallery), **Frog Hollow Vermont State Craft Center** (Coolest Craft Gallery), and the town of **Stowe** (Best Weekend Getaway in Vermont), among several others. And, yes, we'd still like to know where Stowe residents go to get away. Maybe just down the road to the **Stowe/Okemo Mountain Resort & Spa**, which came in second this year? And in the winter, of course, they're likely to be heading back to the Superlative Snow Slope, **Stowe Mountain**. In short, they don't really need to leave town. Unless, of course, they want to venture out to the **Shelburne Museum**, **ECOH Aquarium and Science Center**, the **Flynn Center**, the **Barlington Discover Jazz Festival** or any other whimsical entertainment option in Vermont's Green City.

Barlington's made some deeply miles. That's why we expanded a little this year, offering Dayzees to the Best Local Music Hot Spot (**Hear!**), the Best New Vermont Band (the between **Willowelles** and **Prana**) and Best Up-and-Coming Performer (**Myra Flynn**). We also separated the guys from the boys, so to speak, in the Best Instrumentalist and Vocalist categories. Male winners were **Gordon Stone** and **Gregory Douglas**, respectively, while **Grace Potter** and **Illegals** (both player [keyboard] and singer). In the DJ booth, Burlington's **A-Gee** keeps the party — and the Dayzees — going.

And there were still some new categories: The **Vermont Mozart Festival** earned a Dayze for Best Outdoor Music Series, though the Ben & Jerry's Center on the Green, put on by Higher Ground at the Shelburne Museum, was not far behind. Finally, the Best Theater Company, according to voters, is **Lyric Theatre Company**. It probably doesn't hurt that most of you have been in a Lyric production, backstage or in the audience at some point in your lives.

Readers still like Shelburne's **Kwinlooka** as Best Public Golf Course — **Rocky Ridge** and **Wilketan** golf clubs tied for second. When it's time to make the clubs for sleep, the **Tripp Family Lodge** on the lake for cross-country. And the **darkened-room** crowd still taps **Marnie's Rave** in Burlington as Best Movie Theater, though otherbarbers are starting to catch up with their votes for Williston's **Majestic 30**.

Congrats to all

PAMELA POLSTON

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HIGH NOTES

For classical music of the finest, the Vermont Mozart Festival has a venue that can't be beat: the sloping lawn of the Inn at Shelburne Farms. Listen to a Chopin concerto in the sun. Fiddle over Life We'll be crooked grooves, and you might imagine riding home in a cartage. The soulful Pole is the focus of the Mozart Festival's current season, which features international known soloists such as Rieko Arima, Philippe Entremont, and Jean-François Lalonde, making the romantic notes in settings ranging from the Baroque Opera House to the Ponds at Bolton Valley Resort. For those less classically inclined, there's just "Jazz in the Resort" at the second side Lake House, or a Friday night called "Jazz in the Back" in the dining room of the Inn at Shelburne Farms. The outdoor settings may encourage the little ones to run wild and join. But with its family-friendly, at Vermont Teddy Bear, the Mozart Festival could just nurture a new generation of music lovers. And, with Helen Parkhurst taking the artistic-director reins from founder Mel Kaplan, EG expect new variations in 2011 and beyond.



PHOTO: JEFFREY M. HARRISON

MARGOT HARRISON

Best Vocalist, Male

Gregory Douglass

INDEPENDENT ARTIST

As the music industry continues to hemorrhage money, artists need to find new and innovative ways to support themselves. So how about a tech-based on the public TV network model? Singer-songwriter Gregory Douglass (28) is giving that a shot with a series of weekly live set concerts broadcast live online via the streaming video website JustinTV. Douglass plays songs, takes requests and chats with viewers during the webcast, while simultaneously soliciting donations to finance recording his next album, "I wanted to do it up PG&G style." Douglass says, "If you really want to see the artist you love succeed, you have to consider yourself a patron of the arts." Douglass is also taking donations through his record label's website, www.musicians.com, where, in the spirit of transparency, he's posted his entire budget for the new album. Look for Douglass' fan-financed disc in early 2011. In the meantime, you can get your fix of his strumming voice and acoustic songs every Monday night at 8 p.m. at JustinTV. gregorydouglass.com

TYLER MADWIG

SEVEN DAYSIES

2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

Best live music venue

- (W) Higher Ground (South Burlington)
(RU) Nectar's (Burlington)

Best local music hot spot

- INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY
(W) Nectar's (Burlington)
(RU) Radio Green Coffeehouse (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- (W) Langdon Street Café (Montpelier)
(RU) The Bee's Knees (Montpelier)

Best place to dance

- (W) Club Metronome (Burlington)
(RU) Higher Ground (South Burlington)

Best instrumentalist, male

- (W) Gordon Stone
(RU) Dave Grippio

Best instrumentalist, female

- (W) Grace Potter
(RU) Jennifer Hartswick

Best vocalist, male

- (W) Gregory Douglass
(RU) Lowell Thompson

Best vocalist, female

- (W) Grace Potter
(RU) Myra Flynn

Best new Vermont band

- (W) (tie) Prana Villanillos

Best up-and-coming performer

- (W) Myra Flynn
(RU) Justin Levinson

Best club DJ

- (W) A-Dog
(RU) CRAIG MITCHELL

Best visual artist

- (W) Katharine Montseem
(RU) dugNap



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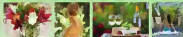
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SEVEN DAYSIES

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Best Theater Company Lyric Theatre Company

Burlington

WHAT A SHOW

It's not as if the Seven Days readers gave a standing ovation to the 37-year-old community theater company every year, about 400 local volunteers take turns to shake Lyric's own splashy musical production. Happened the Flynn Marriage — which means that any Chittenden County resident who hasn't acted, danced or sung in seven costumes for, or publicized a Lyric show probably knows someone who has. When professional Vermont Stage Company — the first runner-up in this category — last year accident for its one-act, small-scale productions, Lyric has stayed big, showcasing local appetites for an evening of old-fashioned song and dance. With a 2013-14 season featuring the family-friendly *Prize Pie* and the dark satire *Chicago*, the players seem set to continue their tradition of offering a little something for everyone.



MARGOT HARRISON

Best Recreation Area Waterfront Park

Burlington



FRONT AND CENTER

Anyone who's strolled the two dead-end streets at Burlington's Waterfront Park knows the secret thrill of seeing so much coveted swampy beach. But the stretch of green lakeshore real estate isn't a lot more going for it than sitting with a lobster view. As a major stop along the bike path, the park is a sprawling hot spot for cycling, running, rollerblading and more. Its verdant fields make way for such annual community blowouts as the Vermont Breweries Festival and the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival tents, while its waves have floated everything from dragon boats to giant pumpkins. Scoop shops and restaurants see a short walk away cruise boats go out on Champlain and return — and — did we mention the view? It's no wonder picnickers, weekend artists and dog walkers seem permanently installed from the first warm day of spring until the fall frost.

CAROLYN FOX

SEVEN DAYSIES 2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

Best art gallery

- (W) Freshhouse Gallery (Burlington)
- (RU) Frog Hollow Vermont State Craft Gallery (Burlington)

Cooler craft gallery

- (W) Frog Hollow Vermont State Craft Gallery (Burlington)
- (RU) Arbans Hand Craft Gallery (Montpelier)

Best movie theater

- INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY
- (W) Momma's Place (Burlington)
- (RU) Majestic 10 (Wilmington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- (W) Sassy Theater (Montpelier)
- (RU) Big Picture Theater and Cafe (Waitsfield)

Best museum

- (W) Shelburne Museum
- (RU) EO-10 Lake Aquarium and Science Center (Burlington)

Best Vermont festival

- (W) Burlington Discover Jazz Festival
- (RU) Vermont Brewers Festival (Burlington)

Best outdoor concert series

- (W) Vermont Mozart Festival
- (RU) Ben & Jerry's Concerts on the Green (Higher Ground at Shelburne Museum)

Best Vermont fiction writer

- (W) Chris Bohjalian
- (RU) Howard Frank Mosher

Best theater company

- (W) Lyric Theatre Company (Burlington)
- (RU) Vermont Stage Company (Burlington)

Best performing arts venue

- (W) Flynn Mainstage (Burlington)
- (RU) FlynnSpace (Burlington)

Best recreation area

- (W) Waterfront Park (Burlington)
- (RU) Oakledge Park (Burlington)

Best Place to Take Your Kids

ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center/ Leahy Center for Lake Champlain

WEEKENDS

LAKE LOVE

With its colorful outdoor Page and Fish-decay, ECHO seems to attract kids away from Oregon's, and the aquarium tanks, interactive exhibits, and science-education programs inside certainly live up to their expectations. The sprawling lake-side center is all about sparking enthusiasm — in folks of all ages — for environmental stewardship of the Lake Champlain Basin. And mount two kids get a head start through a roster of both peak event and changing exhibits. Canoe about Champ? Aquatic displays supplement historical info about the legendary lake serpent. Wondering about the weather? Green screen technology lets you see the meteorological flow and edit broadcast reports. Regular programs such as "Pet Store Science" and "Wacky Weathering" after hours range and crafts about everything from bubbles to butterflies — free with admission. Heck, parents may even be tempted to join this playtime.

CAROLYN FOX



Photo: ECHO Lake Aquarium

Best public golf course

- [W] Kamaska (Shelburne)
- [RU] (1st) Wiliston Golf Club
Rocky Ridge Golf Club (St. George)

Superintive snow slope

- [W] Stowe Mountain Resort
- [RU] Smugglers Notch (Jeffersonville)

Best cross-country ski area

- [W] Trapp Family Lodge (Stowe)
- [RU] Catamount Outdoor Family Center (Wiliston)

Best weekend getaway in Vermont

- [W] Town of Stowe
- [RU] Stowe/Lake Mountain Resort & Spa

Best place to take your kids

- [W] ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center
(Burlington)
- [RU] Shelburne Farms

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Best Vermont Twitter Feed @ShayTotten

Steven Degen

TWEET DEAL We thought we were as smart as you going out a Best Vermont Twitter Feed Dayton award. We thought. We'll be the first to recognize the stars of the local Twitterverse! But while our readers were voting on the Daytonies, a group of enterprising local Facebookers and tweeters created their own Social Media Day and crowned a Social Media King and Queen. As luck would have it, their King and our Dayton winner are one and the same — Steven Degen, political columnist Shay Totten. Over the past two years, Shay has used social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter to seek out and raise up answers to our readers' questions, so disseminate links to must-read stories about Vermont politics — his own and others' — and to report on interesting news in real time. And, of course, in dispatches of 140 characters or fewer, his tweets from the Statehouse during the 2009 gay marriage debate were read and referenced by people all over the country. And Shay continues to write 140 or so words every week for his column, "or there." That's a lot of characters.

CATHY RESMER

MEDIA



Two words: **Tom Messner**. The WPTZ meteorologist is walking away with his eighth Dayton! Even if we like to blame him for inclement conditions, he is still the weatherman with a winning smile. In fact, a number of voters referred to him simply as "Mr. Sunny."

Messner's news team is still runner-up, though, to the latest competitors over at **WCAX** (People, Moseley Barnes referred, deal with it.) Those of you who watch either network via Burlington Telecom may be shocked to know the financially challenged over-the-air supplier fell behind game **Comcast** in the Daytonies this year. Guess there is such a thing as bad publicity.



In radio land, morning-show "entertainment sleaze" talker **Hike & Chalet** at 98 Triple X picked up their second shared Dayton for Best Local Radio DJ. But, even lacking that day's antics, **Vermont Public Radio** landed on top again as Best Radio Station.

Oh, and thanks for once again choosing Steven Degen as Best Vermont Publication. We don't take that honor for granted. We're also happy to see political columnist **Shay Totten** and staff writer Kim Picard picked for first and second place, respectively, for Best Print/Web Journalism. Shay got an extra honor this year: Vermonters who tweet singled him out for Best Vermont Twitter Feed. These would not be the ones who responded with such bombastic as "I refuse to be a twit" or the more humble "I still haven't figured out what that is."

The Vermont Daily Briefing is back to number one in the Daytonies poll for Best Vermont Blog. Fabulous, even if (or maybe because?) its writer, Philip Benich, is running for a seat in the Vermont Senate. And this year, perennial rival Green Mountain Daily fell to third place behind new kid on the blogosphere: **vdoggies.org**.

In the nonpolitical arena, **House of LaHay** kept a solid-to-the-top over **Bill Simmons' Candlelight**. The former site essentially follows the goings-on and antics of the bewigged queens from the First Dinner Theater Park. But you know, honey, they'll drink up real nice for the Daytonies party.

FAMELA POLSTON



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Best Vermont Blog, Political Vermontdailybriefing.com



LOGGING IN After some year hiatus, Shay Tatten's sharp-witted and entertaining political blog Vermont Daily Briefing has returned to the readers' favorite. VDB ranked tops in 2006, 2007 and 2008. Then in June 2009, Tatten boldly declared, "I'll Not Give Up No More Forever!" he hoped readers would find their voices until this fall given that he's a third-grade Sunday Eve. Most "I am Senate candidate" blather spares no person not 2009 as a selection of headline-demonstrations: "Michael Steele Is Paranoid AND They're Out to Get Him Because That's How He Rolls," "Talmi Continues War on the Sentence," "Ted Deutch Not to Wait Until Afterlife to Surge the Purchasing of John's Death," "Just to name a few Vermonters Say Jim Douglas, U.S. Sen. Brian Doble and Sarah's senate campaign by far his favorite statistics (though not necessarily in that order)." Sarah's Dapies win suggests even a guy who doesn't enjoy blog comments can be a first-class "That's just how he rolls."

SHAY TATTEN

SEVEN • DAYSIES 2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

Best print/web journalist

- [W] Shay Tatten (Seven Days)
[RU] Ken Picard (Seven Days)

Best Vermont publication:

- [W] Seven Days
[RU] Vermont Life

Best TV newscast

- [W] WCAX
[RU] WPTZ

Best meteorologist

- [W] Tom Messner (WPTZ)
[RU] "Eye on the Sky" guys (WPR)

Best cable/satellite TV provider

- [W] Comcast
[RU] Burlington Telecom

Best local radio DJ

- [W] Mike & Charli (93 Triple X)
[RU] Pete Powers (99.9 the Buzz)

Best radio station

- [W] Vermont Public Radio
[RU] The Point

Best Vermont blog, political

- [W] Vermont Daily Briefing
(vermontdailybriefing.com)
[RU] VT Digger (vtdigger.org)

Best Vermont blog, nonpolitical

- [W] House of Lemay
(houseoflemayblog-city.com)
[RU] Candleblog (candleboy.com)

Best Vermont Twitter feed

- [W] @shaytatten
[RU] @handyslunch

Best Spot on the Radio Dial Vermont Public Radio

DIALED IN It took Vermont Public Radio six years to best The Point and Champ, but since 2003 the state public radio affiliate has remained tops among Seven Days readers. Could be the simple fact news VPR has to offer or its twice-daily talk show "Vermont Edition" or maybe readers are addicted to "Vermont Home Companion," "The American Life" or "What, What ... Don't Tell Me!" Likely it's all of the above. What readers may not know is that VPR won six regional Edward R. Murrow Awards this year — including one for its reporting on the rescue of Captain Richard Phillips, the Montpelier man who was held hostage by Somali pirates in 2009. We're happy to know the station's beyond "on the wall" when you first came in (to the office!) "according to station president and CEO Robin Sarna" and then you get to the official radio awards "recognized as one of the "most listened to and most supported public stations in the country." Twelve point-four, VPR couldn't do it without member support. So thank you!

PAMELA POLSTON



Robin Sarna
president and CEO

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SERVICES & STUFF

Many of the same store stores continue to win the affection of Dayles voters year after year — **K&N**, **Michael Kneiss**, **Mirror Mirror** and the **Zulane Company Store** among them. Sometimes new challengers crop up, while old standbys go out of business (**RIP Scribbles**). Other stores change locations or add a new one. And, by the way, when businesses have exactly the same name as more than one store, we don't know for sure which one readers are casting their votes for (looking at you, **The Skinny Poodle**). Just as you know, we can match votes to zip codes, or just compile votes if we have to. But it's not an issue unless you want!

Occasionally businesses accustomed to first place find themselves, disappointingly, in second. That's gotta be burning — but it's extra sweet to land back on top, to **Sweet Lady Jane** did this year, for Best Women's Casual Clothing. Especially because owner **Rachel Sender**'s second Church Street Marketplace boutique, **Yiboon**, closed its doors this year.

Other former runners-up remain strong, such as **Good Stuff** for Best Adult Toy Store (even we call the place a dominatrix now!).

Coldwell Banker/Kirchick the artisans **Really** scored its second Dayles for Best Real Estate Agency. While it can't make up for the recession, we hope our modest flower-power brings small comfort. In the two-wheeler department, Burlington's **SkidRack** won out again over the Old Spokes House for Best Bike Shop. Also for the second year in a row, **Tegonetz Resort and Spa** edged out competitor **Stowe/Ellicott Mountain Resort & Spa** for Best Vermont Spa. This year, though, the phloem-at-Ipswich Vermont inspired us to split the category into *Outside* and *Inside Chittenden County*. In the latter group, **The Essex Culinary Resort & Spa** was its first Dayles.

Readers still find the Inn at **Shalbourn Farms** and the Inn at **the Round Barn Farm** (Whitefield) Vermont's best wedding venues, and **Floralist/Beautique** the top spot to get the gown. Where to buy the gals? **Frog Hollow Vermont State Craft Gallery** won this new category — see our sidebar, as noted above, **Coolest Craft Gallery**.

And, though florists are not wedding-specific, readers favor Burlington's **Kathy and Company Flowers** and Montpelier's **The Park Shopper** for those other daisies. Inside Chittenden County, never contender **Full Bloom** (Shelburne) did into second place.

Burlington goldsmith **Timothy Grannin** repeated his win for Best Jewelry Designer. Those still mourning the loss of his remarkable store in downtown Burlington may want to note that Grannin's works can be found at the jewelry collective **Alchemy** on Pitt Street. This year, however, **Perrywinkle's Fine Jewelry** handily nabbed Best Jewelry Store.

We hear that people are reading less and the publishing industry is in the toilet. So it's always interesting to see how *Seven Days* readers respond to the Best Bookstore category. Inside Chittenden County, giant **Barnes & Noble** came in first — but not so very far ahead of indie **Cover Bookshop** on the Church Street Marketplace. (And by the way, preps, the name of your beloved second-to-top shop is not *Like & Love*, *Old Crow* or *Crow's Used Books*. Can't you read?) In central Vermont, bookworms still buy their noses in **Blue Pond Books**. Take that, Kindle and iKind!

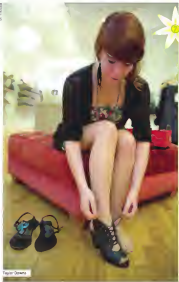
Spending of technology: **Small Dog Electronics** remains readers' choice for Best Computer Store. For the second year running, Best Web Developer went to **Union Street Media**, but we noticed a slight influx of contenders this year. As for the Best Internet Service Provider? **Comcast**, sorry, Burlington Telecom — hope you're still with us next year.

There's one category where small, and arguably outmoded, is still beautiful: **Best Place to Rent a Movie**. Despite the invasion of Netflix and Redbox — and though some readers quired, "People still rent movies?" — **Waverford Video** rules.

In the "green" arena, *Seven Days* readers still find **Seventh Generation** Vermont's Earth-friendlyest company, and **Hudson's** best power people, **NRG Systems**, our runner-up. New boutiques the **Green Life** and **Horne Ecology** each got some votes, too.

Congrats to winners large and small, old and new! Hope to see you at the Dayles party.

PAMELA POLSTON



Top: Courtesy

Best Shoe Store

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

Stella

Burlington

IN STEP As Stella shoes are designed not by brand but by color, which means it all the easier to forget their function and look in their beauty. Shiny flats, low, all-black and chunky platform boots, the **Minna** aren't just footwear. They're aesthetic statements. But the store really wins readers' loyalty because it offers so many choices to shoe lovers who don't want to spend their lives following like Carrie Bradshaw. Vermont's demand: shoes that survive mud season, and look a little better with age and time. And best of all, while sandals and pumps from **Clarks** and **Kenneth Cole** Seattle Souls line prove comfort can look good. Either this year, Stella moved up from its underground digs to the street-level space vacated by **Scribbles**, and now there's plenty of room for style, clothes, jewelry and handbags, too. It's not unusual to see groups of smartly dressed women paired out for an hour on the store's comfy couches searching for the perfect pair.

HAROLD HARRISON

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With Mary Robinson
and Kate Trammell

Best Stationer Ink. Ink. Fine Stationery

Shelburne

WRITE ON — it would be easy to attribute this year's Dayton's victory of Ink. Ink. to the closing of Burlington's Scribbles, a longtime favorite in the category. But Ink. Ink., which occupies the first floor of a gracious house in Shelburne's town center, is on a page of its own. Browse the four pastel-painted rooms, and you'll soon be convinced letter writing isn't a dead art. Stationery sets range from lady-of-the-house genteel — Ink. Ink. carries designs by Kate Spade, Marissa Stewart and Lilly Pulitzer — to basic bulk paper in an array of colors. The store will give it your personal stamp on life. The gorgeous letters may look like fantasies, but Crane & Co. notecards in color camo, such as lime and fuchsia or watermelon and rose go for just \$3 a box. The card telecams are compact but choice — check out the saucy floral pressed designs from Blue Barnhouse. And throw up some old-style correspondence, too.

MARGOT HARRISON

SEVEN • DAYSIES

2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

Best women's casual clothing

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Sweet Lily Jane (Burlington)
[RU] Ecco (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Salaam Boutique (Montpelier)
[RU] Onion River Sports (Montpelier)

Best women's evening wear

- [W] Ecco (Burlington)
[RU] Sweet Lily Jane (Burlington)

Best men's clothing

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Michael Kishoe (Burlington)
[RU] Banana Republic (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] The Men's Store (Montpelier)

Best shoe store

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Stella (Burlington)
[RU] Danform Shoes (Burlington, Colchester, Shelburne)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] The Shoe Holes at Onion River (Montpelier)
[RU] Well Heeled (Stowe)

Best vintage/secondhand clothes

- [W] Old Gold (Burlington)
[RU] Battery Street Jeans (Burlington)

Best children's clothing

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Insaban (Burlington)
[RU] Be-bop Baby Shop (Essex Junction, now closed)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Zulino Company Store (Montpelier)

Best spectacles

- [W] Eyes of the World (Burlington)
[RU] The Optical Center (Burlington)

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Coollest Craft Gallery, Best Place to Buy Wedding Gifts **Frog Hollow** Vermont State Craft Center

Burlington

CRAFTY BUSINESS Since closing its Manchester and Middlebury outlets in the past few years, Frog Hollow has focused all its energy on the Church Street Marketplace location. Representing more than 250 juried artists and artisans of traditional and contemporary craft in Vermont, the store can sell everything from greeting cards, paintings and prints to hand-turned wooden bowls, ceramics and fiber art. Frog Hollow has happily won a Dayze for Coolest Craft Gallery every year. This year it can add another Dayze to its wall for our new wedding gifts category. Chances are, these presents will be returned.

PAMELA POLSTEIN

Best Jewelry Store **Perrywinkle's Fine Jewelry**

Burlington



ANNA HACHABY

SPARKLE PLENTY If diamonds are a girl's best friend, then Perrywinkle's Fine Jewelry is the most popular kid in school. The Main Street location ships out diamonds, and lots of them. You want a 1-carat engagement sparkle in a 4-stone platinum setting? No problem. How about a blinding, 4-carat dazzler—you know for those casual Fridays? Perrywinkle's has you covered. And the good thing about their ice is that you don't have to feel guilty wearing it. Perrywinkle's is committed to sourcing conflict-free diamonds so that your kids' jewelry no wars were funded with the proceeds. If diamonds aren't your jam, Perrywinkle's has plenty of other precious stones—from cabernet to sapphires and every color in between. And with a collection of fine Swiss timepieces, the store doesn't ignore the time. That is, assuming he likes his wristwatchers in the four-figure range.

LAUREN ORR

SEVEN DAYSIES 2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

Best jewelry designer

- (W) Timothy Graham (Burlington)
(RU) Jennifer Kahn (Burlington)

Best jewelry store

- (W) Perrywinkle's Fine Jewelry (Burlington)
(RU) Zinnia (Burlington)

Best beauty-product purveyor

- INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY
(W) Mirror Mirror (Burlington)
(RU) MAC (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- (W) Splash Nails (Montpelier)

Best pet store

- (W) Pet Food Warehouse (Shelburne South Burlington)
(RU) The Pet Advantage (South Burlington)

Best musical instrument store

- INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY
(W) Advance Music Center (Burlington)
(RU) Burlington Guitar & Amp

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- (W) GuitarSam (Montpelier)

Best record store

- INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY
(W) Pure Pop (Burlington)
(RU) Burlington Records

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- (W) Bush Speller (Montpelier)

Best bookstore

- INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY
(W) Barnes & Noble (South Burlington)
(RU) Crow Bookshop (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- (W) Bear Pond Books (Montpelier)
(RU) Riverdeli Books (Montpelier)

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Best Musical Instrument Store

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY GuitarSam

Montpelier

MUSICALLY CORRECT

If you're looking for a sweet new guitar, a report to your concert or some PA gear, GuitarSam is the place to go in central Vermont. The store has been a fixture on the capital city's Main Street for 25 years and now it's got another device to verify its cred: You want a bongo? A mandolin? A digital piano? GuitarSam's got them, too, along with plenty of floor space for you to play your own private concert—I took what you need to make your dream come true. You want something unique? Order a handmade ukulele from award-winning luthier Kevin Crossin, who builds them in the basement of his Middlesex home. *Sharon Orr*

HESSAN JAMES

SEVEN DAYSIES 2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

Best housewares

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- (W) Homeport (Burlington)
- (RW) Kiss the Cook (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- (W) Capital Kitchen (Montpelier)
- (RW) Stowe Kitchen Bath & Linens

Best furniture store

- (W) Burlington Furniture Company
- (RW) Homeport (Burlington)

Best antique/secondhand store

- (W) ReSTORE (Barnes, Burlington)
- (RW) Anjou & the Little Pear (Burlington)

Best lighting shop

- (W) Concert Metal & Light (Burlington)
- (RW) The Lighting House (Shelburne)

Best place to buy wedding gifts

- (W) Frog Hollow Vermont State Craft Center (Burlington)
- (RW) Bed Bath & Beyond (Williston)

Best photo shop

- (W) PhotoGarden (South Burlington)
- (RW) LeZot Camera (Burlington)

Best computer store

- (W) Small Dog Electronics (South Burlington/Watfield)
- (RW) Best Buy (Williston)

Best place to rent a movie

- (W) Waterfront Video (Burlington/Middlebury)
- (RW) Netflix

Best Internet service provider

- (W) Comcast
- (RW) Burlington Telecom

Best web developer

- (W) Union Street Media (Burlington)
- (RW) Eternity Web Development (South Burlington)
- Propeller Media Works (Burlington)

Best stationer

- (W) Ink Ink Fine Stationery (Shelburne)
- (RW) Capital Stationers (Montpelier)

Best bridal shop

- (W) Fion Bridal Boutique (Essex Junction)
- (RW) Sewly Yours & Once Upon a Bride (Burlington)

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has
landed...



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Don't forget to ReStore your clutter.

Best Antique/Secondhand Store

ReSTORE

Burlington and Barre

SECONDS, PLEASE It's mind-boggling how the treasure trove at ReSTORE cheerfully accepts items that look like candidates for the scrap heap: sweats, new life into them, and then offer them up for sale looking only gently worn. Where else in Vermont could you score a vintage Player piano, a 19th-century sewing machine, an original look-and-saunders-wait-again working bicycle deck, a barrel, a figurine, and two dozen copies of *What to Expect When You're Expecting*, all at preposterously low prices? Formerly ReCycleHearts, the nonprofit ReSTORE is a no-guam-buile's dream for used furniture, kitchen wares, electronics, art supplies, and appliances large and small. Whether you're trying to unburden yourself of basement clutter or shopping for James Michener novels by the pound, you'll be hard-pressed to find a better spot.

KEN FIGARO

SEVEN DAYSIES

2010 GUIDE TO READERS' PICKS

Best wedding venue

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Inn at Shelburne Farms
- [RU] The Essex Culinary Resort & Spa (Essex Junction)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Inn at the Round Barn Farm (Waitsfield)
- [RU] Stowe Mountain Lodge

Best florist

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Kathy and Company Flowers (Burlington)
- [RU] in Full Bloom (Shelburne)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] The Pink Shutter (Montpelier)

Best outdoor outfitter

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Outdoor Gear Exchange (Burlington)
- [RU] Eastern Mountain Sports (South Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Orion River Sports (Montpelier)

Best bike shop

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Storak (Burlington)
- [RU] Old Spokes Home (Burlington)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Orion River Sports (Montpelier)

Best auto dealer

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] The Automaster (Shelburne)
- [RU] Heritage Automotive Group (Burlington)

Best real estate agency

- [W] Coldwell Banker Hellok & Boardman Realty
- [RU] Lang McLaughlin Spens Real Estate

Greatest garden center

- [W] Gardener's Supply Company (Burlington, Williston)
- [RU] Claussens Florist & Greenhouse (Colchester)

Best VT green business

- [W] Seventh Generation (Burlington)
[RU] NRS Systems (Hinesburg)

Best place to do your banking

- [W] Merchants Bank
[RU] TD Bank

Best place to buy a pipe

- [W] Full Tank (Burlington)
[RU] The Barn Gallery (Burlington)

Best adult toy store

- [W] Good Stuff (Burlington St. Albans, Waterbury Center)
[RU] Imago (Colchester)

Best hair salon

- [W] Indigo (Burlington)
[RU] Stephen & Burns Salon, Spa and Boutique (Burlington)

Best place to get body art

- [W] Yinkoo Tattoo (Burlington)
[RU] Jade Lotus Tattoo & Piercing (Burlington)

Best yoga studio

- [W] Evolution Physical Therapy & Yoga (Burlington)
[RU] Yoga Vermont (Burlington)

Best health club

- [W] Sports & Fitness Edge (Essex, St. Burlington, Williston)
[RU] Greater Burlington YMCA

Best Vermont spa

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] The Essex Culinary Resort & Spa
[RU] Cynthia's Spa (Burlington)
Oasis Day Spa (Williston)

OUTSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

- [W] Tapscotch Resort and Spa (Stowe)
[RU] Stowe/Nike Mountain Resort & Spa (Stowe)

Best manicure/pedicure

- [W] Tooties (Burlington)
[RU] Oasis Day Spa (Williston)



Best Furniture Store

Burlington Furniture Company

Burlington

TAKE A SEAT Slip inside the spacious, brick and stone pillared entrance of the Burlington Furniture Company and the first thing you notice is the rich smell of leather. That's aptly so, since any visit to the store — formerly called the Burlington Parlor Company — is a sensory experience. There are plush couches to wallow in, suede pillows to snuggle against, brick and bamboo dining room tables that practically beg fingers to caress them. Little wonder that readers chose BFC as their first pick for fine furnishing in Vermont. Recently the store expanded into the space previously occupied by Light Works. Which showsrooms nearly doubled in size. There's even more space for leather ottomans, art deco lamps and other sleek, modern decor. One special place on the floor is the faux suede velvet chair they don't list shop here!

KEN PICARD



Best Spa

INSIDE CHITTENDEN COUNTY

The Essex Culinary Resort & Spa

Essex

AHHH Need a snack? The Essex Culinary Resort & Spa claims to be the "ultimate getaway experience" and seven days readers don't disagree. Perhaps they took a bath online at the resort's full-service spa and fitness center options. The Essex promises to pamper, beginning with its pristine outdoor pool, waterfall and oversized hot tub. Steam rooms, saunas and relaxation lounges augment an evening array of massage, body treatment, facial and salon services. Sport out with the Muscle Milk, a temporarily limited deal for rare bodies, or the ultra-coloring Green Tea and Ginger Wrap. Or try the Warm Stone Massage, where essential oils soothe tired muscles into lovely relaxation. With all this downtime, you may just work up an appetite in whatever you can sample, such as spa cuisine selections as Grilled Shrimp With Papaya or the Soba Noodle Festival. We all deserve a little R&R now and then.

CAROLYN FOX



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